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NEWS

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For Immediate Release:

DONORS, RECIPIENTS GATHER AS EIU RECOGNIZES IMPORTANCE OF GIFTS

CHARLESTON – Jim and Anne Struebing know firsthand how comforting it is to have their son's memory carried on in the form of a scholarship and room dedication at Eastern Illinois University.

The couple traveled from New Holland to be among the nearly 200 people who gathered at the Neal Welcome Center on Friday for the annual endowment tea to recognize the importance of giving to the university, for both the donors and the recipients.

Ryan Struebing, who graduated with bachelor's and master's degrees from EIU, was an elementary school speech therapist when he unexpectedly died at age 24 from a rare heart infection in 2003.

The response from Ryan's friends, fraternity brothers and classmates was overwhelming, with their donations providing a living legacy for the popular young man who was very involved in campus activities.

The Ryan Struebing Graduate Scholarship benefits students in the Communication Disorders and Sciences program, and a clinician's room in the Human Services Building bears his name.

Jim Struebing spoke to the crowd about how much it means to his family to have his son's memory live on through the scholarship and room dedication.

The tea provided a chance for donors to meet with scholarship recipients and representatives of the programs that benefited from their gifts.

"This annual event is highly anticipated by our endowment donors," said Karla J. Evans, EIU executive director of development. "It offers them the opportunity to see the tangible outcomes of their philanthropy. It recognizes that education is important to our future."

Lindsay Roberts of Springfield spoke about receiving the Frances Meyer Hampton Graduate Scholarship. The scholarship, the largest available to EIU graduate students, provides \$20,000 over two years to a student. Roberts is studying to become a school psychologist.

EIU President Lou Hencken thanked donors, congratulated recipients and encouraged students to remember the impact of their scholarships and to give back to EIU when they are able.

Other speakers included Sara Jane Preston, president of the EIU Foundation; Jill Nilsen, EIU vice president for external relations; and Stanley G. Rives, EIU president emeritus.